For Immediate Release  
Contact: Jody Cofer, URSA Program Coordinator  
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Mark Receives Undergraduate Research Grant

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA) has awarded a grant in the amount of $100 to Nolan Mark. URSA grants encourage collaborative research, scholarly, and creative experiences between undergraduate students and faculty, by providing undergraduates with financial support.

Mark is a Civil Engineering Technology major in the Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology. He will be conducting research alongside faculty mentor Ben Ashburn, a new addition to the Department of Industrial and Engineering Technology, and Dr. Mike Kemp as senior faculty mentor. Mark is from Auburn, Indiana. His research is entitled “Detection of Sand Boil Locations Along the Mississippi River in Fulton County, Kentucky.” The project focuses on sand boils caused when river water is forced below levees and “boils” to the land surface beside the levee. Specifically, it looks to discover how remotely sensed data may be used to pinpoint locations of sand boils and then compare those results based on ground soil tested data. Mark’s research conclusions will be sent to the Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

“Nolan is very capable of carrying out the proposed project. In fact, he has already done quite a bit of work leading up to this point, and he is keenly interested in the topic,” Ashburn said, “He is an excellent student with a great attitude.”

Mark plans to present his research at the Sigma Xi poster competition during this year’s Murray State Scholars Week celebration in April 2014. He also plans to present at the Kentucky Academy of Science, the Kentucky Professional Association of Surveyors, the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, the American Society of Engineering Education, and Posters-at-the-Capitol.

More information about the URSA program can be found online at http://campus.murraystate.edu/services/ursa/ or by calling (270) 809-3192.